

For Immediate Release



Beirut: 20-5-2021

Three-minute thesis competition winners at AUB announced

The Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) hosted its first Three-Minute Thesis Competition in May 2021, with a preliminary round that was held to choose seven semifinalists out of all the graduate students who registered for the competition.

Turning a complex research project into a concise three-minute summary is a challenging task. More so when that three-minute summary is intended for communication to a non-specialist audience. The FAFS Three-Minute Thesis competition provides a fair number of challenges to the contestants, from consolidating the most interesting and relevant aspects of their projects into a brief summary, constructing one slide to represent the key details, to presenting all of this information to a jury and live audience. However, this year, the COVID-19 global pandemic presented an additional challenge: in this time of social distancing, the contestants had to present virtually. Yet, all contestants rose to the new set of challenges presented by the virtual realm of WebEx and worked diligently to present their research from their homes, both in Lebanon and abroad.

The competition's first place and \$1,500 prize was won by Ayman Makarim for his project "Can Lebanon improve food production in light of available water resources – The case of AREC." The winner of the second place and \$1,000 prize was Janelle Zakour for her project "Predictors of mental wellbeing during COVID-19 pandemic confinement: A comparative study between adult Arabs of the Levant and Gulf." The winner of the People's Choice Award and third place, in addition to the \$500 prize was Omar Bahlawan for his project "The association between dietary intake and the severity of symptoms among COVID-19 patients – A case control study in Beirut, Lebanon." The competition was sponsored by Boecker who offered generous support to the winners.

The competition's jury members included Deputy General Manager at Berytech Ramy BouJawdeh; Chairperson at the Department of Agriculture at the Issam Fares Faculty of Technology - University of Balamand Rodrigue Balaa; Director of Executive Education at

AUB's Olayan School of Business Fida Kanaan; Assistant Professor of Hydrogeology at the Department of Geology at AUB's Faculty of Arts and Sciences Joanna Doummar; Country Manager at Boecker Public Health Bana Kalash Kobrosly; and Adjunct Professor of Landscape Architecture at AUB and President of the Lebanese Landscape Association Jala Makhzoumi.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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